

## **Executive Director Message to All Staff**

**July 2, 2012**

I am honored that the Board of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department selected me to serve as your interim executive director at their June 22 board meeting. This is my second opportunity to work with many of you after having served as the former TYC's conservator from March through June 2007.

When I rejoined the agency back in May 2012, my primary focus was on safety and security issues throughout TJJD. While I will now be responsible for the entire agency, I will continue to emphasize safety and security for both our staff and youth. Rehabilitation programming will not succeed if youth are in constant fear that they will be harmed while in our facilities. Equally important, we cannot retain experienced staff if they do not feel safe in their jobs.

I'm certain you have heard about the Phoenix Program, which will operate at Mart. This program is designed specifically to remove the most assaultive youth from our facilities. They will be placed in a highly structured and secure dorm where staff can help them focus on their aggression issues. This program is now open and ready to receive youth. We are also working on a number of safety and security initiatives.

I understand that the work you do is difficult and often goes under-appreciated. Thank you for continuing to do the important work at hand and, when you see me at your facility, please don't hesitate to introduce yourself. You may also send any comments or concerns to me through email.

Jay